

oasisradio

soundscaping the club, the net and your living room

sam zipursky

Originally from the East Coast of Canada, Dan Elliot made the move to Japan immediately after graduating from university in 1998. After stints as an English teacher, a DJ and owner of a bar called Oasis Lounge, in 2004 he came up with **OasisRadio** - "a non-profit project focused on forming a community of music and events in Osaka and beyond" that incorporates live events and streaming radio shows over the Internet. I met up with Dan for a chat about the Osaka DJ scene and OasisRadio's unique place in the mix.

Sam Zipursky: Hey Dan, so what is OasisRadio all about?

Dan Elliot: It's a place for like-minded artists to gather and become more engaged in the music they love, and to connect with people who love their music. What OasisRadio isn't, is a place of random sounds and DJs whose main goal is self-promotion. OasisRadio is not about "me", it's about "us". Having lived in Osaka for the past 12 years I've seen my share of DJs, musical fads and clubs come and go. There seems to be a revolving door that spits these people and places out like clockwork.

SZ: Why do you reckon that is?

DE: Foreign DJs who worry more about padding their wallets and egos than playing quality, cutting-edge EDM have and will be forgotten. Time and again, I've seen the DJ that storms into town on an express train of self-promotion and quickly forgets, if they ever knew, that it's not about "you" - it's about the music and the community. Those DJs who have decided to put their ego in their pocket, engage with the community and contribute have flourished and to this day remain integral pieces of that community.

SZ: And this project isn't just restricted to *gaijin* DJs, is it?

DE: Not at all. On the Japanese side, I've seen the quality and numbers of DJs grow considerably over the years. The birth of the digital DJ has brought up a crew of young and talented artists. All of the Japanese DJs who host shows on OasisRadio were chosen because they have skills and a great sense for music. It's exciting to see what happens when they are released from the Japanese cultural *senpai-kohai* relationship that stifles Japanese DJ circles. We hope OasisRadio can provide a forum where the cream can rise to the top. There are some great Japanese DJs out there who need to be heard.

SZ: How did the project get going, then?

DE: OasisRadio was born out of Oasis Lounge. In 2004, we started broadcasting events live over the Internet. I wasn't of this aware at the time, but we were the first in Japan to broadcast live to an online audience. It turned out to be a smashing success, so when the bar closed in 2008 it was a natural progression to continue the love affair with the music and OasisRadio came to be. Some of the same DJs who played at Oasis Lounge have been instrumental in the creation of OasisRadio and continue to host regular shows on the radio today.

SZ: What kind of music and DJs can be heard on the OasisRadio shows that are available for streaming?

DE: EDM has such breadth in sound that I don't like sticking a genre label on what we do, but if I was pressed to describe the sound I would have to say that it focuses on beats, bass, drive and quality. I guess the main genres by name would be tech house, minimal techno and progressive, but we also have shows that feature jazz, rare groove and ambient. It is radio, after

all, so not only do we play what you would want to hear at a club, but we also look for artists and music that we would want to listen to in our living rooms over a glass of wine. We try to remember that your living room and a club are two different environments that require different soundscapes. In the end, it's all about quality music and quality DJs. No self-promoting posers need apply.

SZ: Sounds great (literally). I know you mentioned you tie in live music events with what you're doing on the radio... How does that work?

DE: We focus on two types of events: OasisRadio parties that I personally organize and play at, and OasisRadio-supported parties that are organized by people who we feel are focused on music, vibe and community. The former are fulfilling for me personally because I get to see first-hand how the OasisRadio family is growing. It's great to see the new faces who continually show up at each successive party and for me, witnessing this is more gratifying than any statistic about the hundreds of listeners we have. But the latter are, in a way, more important. Getting the word out about events that are focused on quality music, talented DJs and community is the mission of OasisRadio. Without these parties we will be left with a club scene that is rife with poser DJs and pole dancers. Our ultimate goal is to make sure this doesn't happen.

Get along to the next OasisRadio-supported party: "CODA vs MIXJUICE" on December 19th at Sound Channel, Shin-saibashi. See the new homepage (completely redesigned and now with a dedicated chat room) for more info and to tune in to streaming OasisRadio shows.

www.oasis-radio.net / admin@oasis-radio.net

